King County Mental Health Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division
2006 Briefing Paper

Supplemental Budget Request from Children's Administration

BACKGROUND:

During the 2005 Legislative session Children's Administration (CA) secured funds to support the placement of chemical dependency professionals (CDPs) in local Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) offices. The CDPs provide training and consultation to DCFS staff and direct client service. As a result of a fiscal note error, only 14 of the original 25 positions were funded. The CA supplemental budget request will restore the original intent of the Legislature and fund eleven additional CDPs statewide.

ISSUES/CHALLENGES:

Many factors may account for the escalation in abuse and neglect, including poverty, domestic violence, and an increasing personal mobility that results in the loss of family support systems. However, the primary cause is clear – substance abuse and addiction. A large percentage of parents who abuse, neglect, or abandon their children have drug and alcohol problems. Treatment and early intervention with substance abusing parents will result in fewer out of home placements, earlier reunification and, in some of our more sever cases, save lives.

DATA:

In fiscal year 2004 Children's Administration responded to the following:

98,000	New Requests for services from Children's Administration
80,000	Referrals for abuse or neglect
18,000	Voluntary requests for services
38,000	Referrals accepted for CPS investigation concerning 47,000 children
7,300	New foster care placements

Although national data are incomplete, it is estimated that substance abuse is a factor in three-fourths of all foster care placements.

RECOMMENDATION/LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

The Legislature should support Children Administrations 2006 supplemental budget request. This request will restore the original intent of the Legislature passed during the 2005 session. It will add an additional eleven CDPs statewide including two additional positions in King County.